WILLAM C. WHITNEY HIDDEN WISDOM OF "THE HERMIT OF ZOAR."

Delightful Observations of a Literary Recluse That Are Now Published for the First Time.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC. In these days of imitative writing and literary backing one seldom comes upon a volume like "The Hermitage Zoar Note Book of Alexander Gunn," which is printed by Mr. William C. Whitney and comes from the press of De Vinne & Co. It is the revelation of a rare personality, unfolded in a unique style and provocative of none but pleasant thoughts.

As it is printed for private circulation smong the friends of the late Mr. Gunn there is nowhere in it any formal recom-mendation or explanation. It is intended for those who already know semething of the Hermit Author and his qualit home. Those outside that circle who hamply come by the book must make up of suggestions here and there in the text the frame of the charming story.

This, however, is not difficult, for one re-calls that some time in November last news telegrams from Cleveland announced that former Secretary William C. Whitney had gone to Zoar, in Ohio, to bury his friend. Alexander Gunn, whose remains had been brought from Nauhelm, in Germany,

where he died a month or so before.

The name of the man and the place wer new. The great light of publicity that beat on the life and public services of one of these friends had never touched the other, and he remained in the shade all his days. The funeral occasioned no little curlosity

Since then accounts of Zoar and the Zoarites have been printed, from which we learn that, some time about 1817, there set-tled at what is now Zoar, in Ohio, a colony of Swabians, under the leadership of a man named Beimler. They had been driven from their homes across the sea by the exactions of taxation and tyranical conscriptions. They settled in what was then a wilderness and their descendants had since maintained the Commune

Farming and raising stock on the system they brought with them they were now, with their mediaeval farming methods, a very anachronism in the midst of the modern civilization of their adopted State, But of Alexander Gunn nothing. In death, as in life, he continued out of the reach of the common eye. HERMIT'S BOOK ARTISTICALLY

RAISES THE VEIL.

But now comes the volume printed by Mr Whitney for private circulation among the liftime friends of Alexander Gunn, in which the well is artistically raised, dis-

ing very bemanly and with artistic art-

h. I. It was not known, even to his most inti-nate friends, that Mr. Gunn ever wrote

more than an occasional letter of friendship,

clamors and empty ambitions of the world"; that "he was then in the prime of life, with fine health, and had retired from ac-

tive business, in which he had accumulated what he considered an ample fortune"; that

visits to Zoar lengthened as the years went by, until "at last his life accidentally took root in the simple community and he made

there a permanent home in the 'Hermitage,' a simple little cottage," which is the center a simple little cottage," which is the center of the amazing interest the volume dis-

which Mr. Gunn, unapprehensive of posthu-mous publication, set down in random notes

or occasional letters. It is, in fact, an un-

conscious autobiography, wherein the time honored traditions of this form of work are

thrown to the winds. Mr. Whitney is to be

congratulated for having savei his friend from the levelling hand of an editor who

might have healed some literary defects, but would as surely have spoiled the picture of

a splendid man, etched surely in short but

we do not usually retire from active busi-

ness in Cleveland, or any other city of this strenuous Union, at 42 particularly if for-

tune is coming our way. What is common enough in older lands-France, for instance—is almost shocking, if not insidiously im-

Mr. Gunn was not soured. He was very easy in his heart, and lived, if we may say

circling hills that shut in the primitive township of Zoar-the place of rest. The

Swabians so called it, because when they reached it they were very tired. Mr. Gunn

went there because he was tired elsewhere.

Strange thing-the man of cities found there when the rustic Swabians found. He came, enjoyed it, and went, Soon his stay became longer than his absence. At last he "took root," and thereafter it was home-all very human, easy process. He melts

into "the community."
"Here I am free from the envy the poor must feel toward the arrogance of pride and wealth, for here is a pure democracy. There is no shade of gradation in the social

scale. I sit at table by the side of the coal miner and feel no shudderings; the plough-man is my friend and equal; when I think how vastly more simple his life is I feel

This from his little four-page history of Eoar that opens the book.

But, after all, these are things that have

been thought and said before. Ah, but in the final clause the individual note is dis-

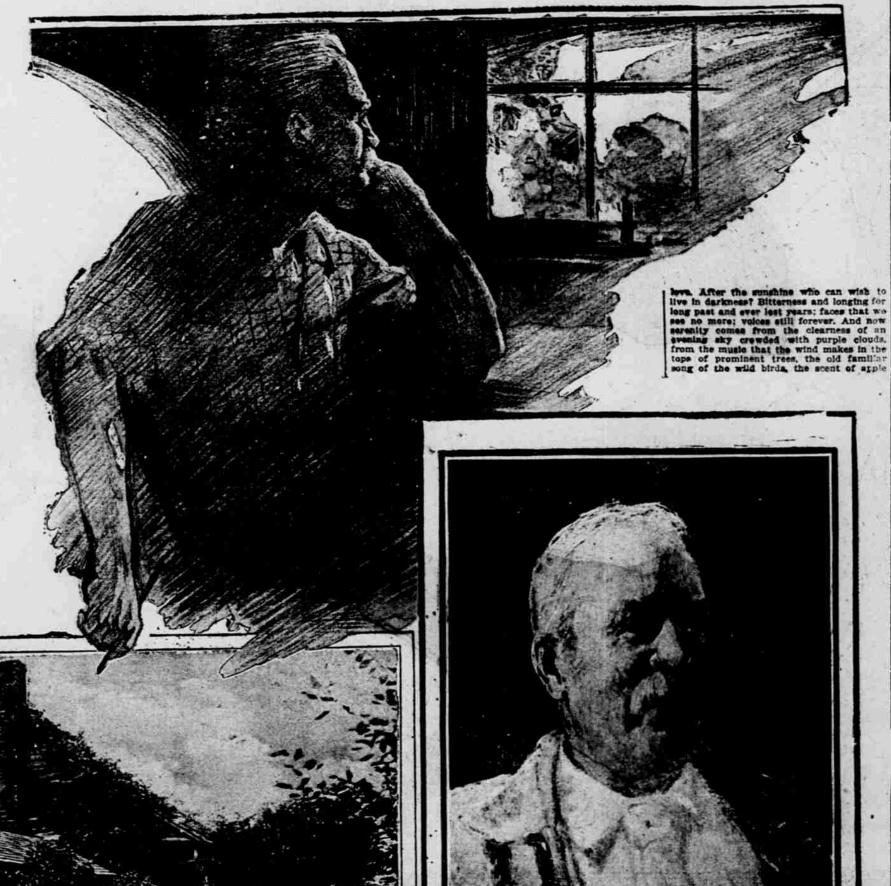
that he is my superior."

moral, in ours.

NOT A SOURED HERMIT

BUT PEACE SEEKER.

Thereafter there is nothing except that



bers George IV. well, and sighs when he is compelled to say he 'cannot say much in

"I assumed the grand air and the sentries presented arms. I raised my hat with a look of condescending urbanity, to the min-gled delight and consternation of my friends." What fun he was having! Covent Garden Opera-house, with Melba and Jean de Reszke, in "Lobengrin." Of

this he says: "House stuffy and overheated; full of splendid people. Prince and Princess of Wales there. Overa in parts beautiful, but

too long and devoid of action. The swam sticks and is finally kicked off by Lohengrin; the Gove also hangs fire."
"I have established at Covent Garden a regular acquaintance with the market peo-

ple, who cheerly say 'Good morning.' EVERY ROOM A

CABINET OF CURIOSITIES.

Then he spends the day amid the wonders of Holland House, where "every room is a cabinet of curiosities." Hatfield House he inspects, too. Where is it he cannot go with those magic friends of his?

Of what we call snapshot pictures, here are a few that any traveler will recognize:

"To the old King's Arms taphouse; the kitchen, with meat rousting; the sailor who had been to San Francisco; the sad-faced

"To Weymouth Athletle Tournament. Very sweet and preity picture; the village clergyman presides; the shabby tailor who ran so well."

ran so well."
"At Walton to see a regatta. Much merriment and beer at the Angler's Home; one
purter goes overboard."
"Rowing up the Wee; the fields glorious
"Rowing up the of the sun, I see the

with the lovely rays of the sun. I see the sun setting in splendor afar off, and hear the music of a peal of bells. This is God's own country, so good and green, and all the people so innocent and kindly. The parish priest, with benignant face, fishes in the stream, with fair daughters at his side."

There you have the essence and the charm of midsummer in mid-England in a few suggestive dabs. In Scotland we have the same great pictures.
"The girl with a red but not unlovely

face, who sings Coming Through the Rye," not without feeling;" who never notices the coppers flung at her, but sees them all the e, and picks them up when the sout

"At a hotel. On our floor tin cantdlesticks; floor above brass; landlady buxom and strong-minded, with a keen Scotch accent. The house holds its head high. There is a rumor that her Majesty once went through here, but it is uncertain if she stopped.

HB CALLS MANCHESTER

A "VILE" CITY.

He finds much ecstasy in the mountain scenery. They return to England and go through the Black Country. Manchester on Saturday night did not please him.
"I never saw a riler population; drunken men and women huddled into every rum shop, and they are very plenty; maudiin one could fill a little gallery with the etch-

ings of random people that he miets, and from the gay or notable people, who only appear in intials, to the coachman who "should 'ave gone to London, where me talents would 'ave told," and who winds up with the consolatory phrase, "but I

Back again at Zoar he takes a reflective "In literature there is much ignorant

nise of country life."
"Lace is to the old a vanity; to the young

Suddeniv arether journey begins. He is wooed away from Zoar to a trip through the East. He goes up the Nile in state. His spirit is not so blithe, but his feelings are ver deeper. A querulous sensitiveness clouds his hours somewhat. There from the heart of Ewot his heart flies back to Zoar.

"Ind there come to my oyes." Dut the old simple humor is there always. He naively records in this Nile journey: "I take a drink of " " whisky and sods,

had luncheon on the terrace. The

music played. One with a face of deathless

and alluring beauty came to sell things. We did not live—we swam to ecstasy, and over

all the sun, and the blue, transparent sea at our feet. Oh, Italy! What can I say of you? Land of song and beauty! Where even the weeds are beautiful! Oh, ye powers who made me, shall I long in vain for an

ternity like this, where the hungry soul is fed with beauty and with music? When we landed, a child of mearthly beauty, like Raphael's angel, took me by the hand."

he so admired.

Something had gone to his heart. During

away, descending the steps with a grandlose air which seemed to awe the menials about."

"The Windsor Castle guide 'who remembers George IV, well,' and sighs when new the step with a grandlose in hight. Then we have a keg of Gehring beer and the band plays. The players in sist that Louis changes the tempo according to the quantity of beer he has consumed. There is an animated discussion."

All through the gossiping little notes that second the days in drowsy Zoar are scattered wondering suggestions as to what lies beyond. Once he says: "I lack the enthusiasm which, to the be-

liever, shows the open gate of heaven. Help Thou, O God, my unbelief. I am innocent,

for I do not know." Again in the midst of the great snow-storm, us he sat before the fire in the Her-

"As for me, I am in the hands of that great unknown and unknowable force which brought me, not being consulted, and which takes me unwillingly again. I trust me in the hands of this awful power beyond the

the hands of this awful power beyond the hysterical explanations of the orthodox. I trust, and I can wait." And, again, but a few days before he gled be wrote in pencil this unfinished fragment,

which, it appears, was found among his papers at Nauheim: "Often to my veiled reason there comes a voice to which, without any sense of in-credulity. I listen; this pure note—"

This unfinished entry of hopeful sigges-tion appropriately appears as a concluding line in the Notebook. The second volume is to contain such let-ters of Alexander Gunn as have survived

Politeness vs. Credulity. "Oh, dear! it's such hard work to be a lady sometimes, isn't it?" sighed a pretty Undine in a blue bathing suit as she threw

"Couldn't say, never having tried it," he grinned, and dodged a shower of pebbleh aimed with no inconsiderable feminine skill. as he went on hastily; "but I thought na-ture had saved you that trouble, Miss Mer-maid, by making you a lady to begin with; so whence these navy-blue remarks?"
"Well," replied the Undine, resignedly, "I

"Well," replied the Undine, resignedly, "I hope I was born a lady, though that poor word is so deadly overworked these days 't scarcely seems a title to be coveted any more. But the business of building the superstructure of nature's foundation of the akyecraper known in character building as a gentlewoman is an arduous occupation. It readdy is, You've no idea"—
"Not guilty," he interrupted, impertmentive.

"How some people make you just long to be a primeval savage." she went on, ignor-ingly, tapping her fingers in time to the music from the pavilion above. "Now, there's that woman I just swam out to the raft with. She wakes every scalping in-stinct that I ever had passed down to me from my antediluvian ancestors."

"Did they scalp before the flood?" he inquired, casually.

"Don't interrupt, or I won't be a lady another minute. As I was saying, that woman has raked off every bit of veneer of civlization from me. She has been trying to stuff me all the morning with all sorts of stuff me all the morning with all sorts of things, from plastering over her latest flirtation to the padded price of her new bonnet. And just because I smiled and said and mailed into every rum they are very plenty; maudling agoss open caresses."

If they are very plenty; maudling affine a second of things, from plastering over her latest flirtation to the padded price of her new bonnet. And just because I smiled and said and just because I smiled and said a

"Incredible virtues always surround understood and wholly unseen goda."

"Belored visions! Why should I ak for the grosses earthly shapea."

"Cryllization makes it easy to procure food. sair there, and hunger have become against an analysis when he thinks he is a paralysis."

Song of the Shirt. With fingers nimble and white. With eyes that are tenderly blue A summer girl in gay summer frills Sat plying her needles two.

Knit, knit, knit, 'Neath the broad veranda's sh Asks the summer man, sitting idly "Will my sweater soon be made?" Work work work."

She softly toade reply.
Work, work, work;
We'll ese that by and by. Sleeve and body and neck. Neck and body and sleeve; A man would never nonceive. Knit knit knit Ritt. Ritt.

I've been a! It from morn to night;

Knit, knit, knit.

Don't breathe till this stitch is right.

No. I dare not go to the beach.

2023

And I will not go for a walk; A drive would take us by far too long: I've hardly time to talk. "Knit, knit, knit, My brain is all in a whiri;

Knit, knit, knit, Was there ever so weary a girl? Tet I dare not put it saide.
For Mildred and Mand and Grace
Are working like mad on sweaters, too.
And I'm bound to win in the race.

Work, work, work, While other girls riggie and play;
Work, work, work,
While my thoughts are off and away.
For it's all for a summer man
To wear on the links this fall, And should he forget me before it is There are other golfmen—that's all!

Knit, knit, knit, But would you not suppose That when this labor of love is done

He'd feel he must propose? Knit, knit, knit, But that I cannot know,

I take a drink of whitay and soda, and it adds a new glory to the sky."

Italy, however, wine his adoration. Beauty leaps out of it at him, oftenest leaving him speechless at the beauty of the land and the people. "Looking on these radiant faces, I am sick to think that I am old." Rome, For the goal's not won till the sweater's And I've knit the final row."

Kind Chance Saved Him.

Kind Chance Saved Him.

There were five or six of us, under the pilotage of a cowboy, looking for a crossing of the Republican River when we caught sight of a man fast in a quicksand.

"Hello, you!" shouted the cowboy, as we halted our horses.

"Hello, yourself! was the reply.

"You are one of the fellers we hustled off'n Big Four t'other day?"

"And what of it?"

"Nuthin', only you won't bother us no more! You'll be out of sight in an hour!"

"Don't you bank on that," growled the stranger. I've bin in wuss fixes nor this and come out all right."

"The willin' to take chances. If I win, you can help me out; if I lose you kin ride on and be hanged to you!"

It was an appeal the cowboy couldn't refuse, and after a minute he replied:

"You rustlers don't deserve no show, but let 'er go. If you lose, though, I'll isore you to go to the bottom! Toss 'er up, and call out!"

"I say talls!" exclaimed the man, as he in the hank.

call out!"
"I say tails" exclaimed the man, as he filrted the half dollar to the bank.
"Tails she is," replied the cowboy, as he bent in his saddle. "Now, then, Letch the end of this lariat and come ashore and jest let me tell you that if you don't make yourself skeerce the boys will either hang or shoot you!"
"Skeerce she am!" said the man, as he got his breath and cast off the lariat, and

got his breath and cast off the lariat, and without walting to acrape off the mud be started off up the river and was seen less

She Was a Golf Widow. Lonely woman sitting on a rock. Two

First Fisherman: "That's a lonely low womman. She sits on that rock a day knit, knit, knitting. She never speaks leevin' soul. An old maid, I suppose? Second Fisherman: "Auld maid! Not! I ken her fine; she's marrit to a "Not Stray Stories."

and, as he was himself unconscious of any literary ability, this volume comes as a surprise. After his death three little notebooks were found among his effects. These, with nature worshipers, goes to the make-up of this retired merchant of Cleveland. Some-thing, too, of Walt Whitman's deep humansome scattered scraps make up the volume. There is no attempt in the brief note that introduces and explains the publication to appreciate the author. With a simplicity and suppression of sentiment that must have been difficult, considering the nature ity and masculine love of all beauty. He has a distinct kinshin with Omar; even a cousinship with the unctuous, intellectual side of Faistaff. He vibrates with a quick sensi-tiveness to all the life around him, but his of the lifelong friendship that existed be-tween the author and the publisher, it is stated that Mr. Gunn was born in 1837; that he went from the stir and bustle of Cleve-land in 1879 to quiet Zoar "to escape the

expression of his sensations is always charte and simple, direct and natural.

The amiable agnosticism of his serious moments and a certain cheerful pantheism beautifully shade for him the riddle of the universe. In thinking of him the word "mellow" rises to the mind. He is fond of the word himself, and uses it in every shade of its range of meaning. Side by side, in-deed, with the pleasure one derives from his notes and comments there constantly marches a curiosity as to the full measure of the man who made them. The more we read him the more we want to know of the

genial hermit of Zoar. HE WAS COMPANIONABLE.

THOUGH A RECLUSE. Strange thing for a hermit, we picture him almost instantly as the most companonable of men. What he was to the leading lights of the rough spun Zoarites in their isolated community he just as surely was to hosts of men of very different cali-

those people of the world outside Zoar by initials only, one plainly sees among the great number in the little pictures he has left the late Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mr. left the late Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mr. D. O. Mills, Mr. Crocker of California; "Dan" O'Connell of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco; Lawrence, the author of "Kashmir," now Serre-tary to Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India; Senator Mark Hanna, Grover Cleveland, Moreton Frewen, Myron T. Herrick, Mrs. Jack Gardner, a few Bishops, Governor-Todd, Sir William Van Horne, a few Lords and ladies, Duchesses and others, and William McKinley-ad in a natural sort of peli-mell, coming and going in pageantry of travel and entertainment.

And these outside old-time friends it was

so, on Easy street, easefulwise. The noise of the active town got on his nerves a bit. He would try how quiet it was amid the enwho, from time to time, tured him away from Zoar. If, with Ludwig, Christian, Louis and Joseph, his life was primitive and patriarchal, once across the waters of the Tuscarawas he traveled en Prince in special cars, in splendid staterooms, and lodged in palaces and palace hotels. In all he was equally at home. Two of these journeys are described in the book. That a man with so wide and fine an sc-

That a man with so wide and fine an acquaintanceship as is disclosed in these recovered fragments should have successfully escaped publicity and notoriety, as he intentionally did, is to be recorded as a distinct achievement of personal dignity. One of the few regrets he seems to have suffered during his peaceful days was over the establishment of a newspaper in a town adjacent to Zoar, and the other is over the intrusion of some sightseers into the accreding transfer of the control of the contro intrusion of some sightseers into the sacred precincts of the Hermitage, which fronted the Via Sacra, in the slumberous village of

his home.

But it was with this as with every other annoyance be had, which was usually dismissed with the phrase. "I forgive everybody everything." and he soon forgot this near-by disturber of privacy. tinctly heard, and thence onward you never lose it. Bit by bit there rises from the pages, fragmentary as it all is, a kindly, genial presence, full of hearty human laughter and for of living, with wistful underiones and sad smiles that ever and anon give way to beautiful enthusiasms.

GUNN A MASTER OF WORD PAINTING.

with Zoar, only one survives, namely, the little history of the colony already referred to. From 1839 on there is more of them. The willage doings, the village scenes; the births, the deaths, the glory of the woods and fields in every season, are jotted down here with every sign of intimacy. The en-during execulence of his simple style leaps out at one from every page. His faculty of painting a picture-a clear cut cameo-in a few master strokes-the snapshop faculty.

THE HERMITAGE

if one may adopt such a phrase-is wender In April, 1900, he writes: 'Now sets in a storm of snow and wind. The windows rattle and all the gables and chimneys lend a noise to the roaring wind.

The sleety snow, dashing against the windows, luils me to sleep.

In the morning all was white, but the birds, sturdily singing, refused to believe that winter was come again. The distances are obscured by snow, which, before the blast, flies in clouds. The trees bend low under the

Here is a reminiscence: "Obed, returning for the first time after-his departure from home, can scarcely con-ceal the ecstasy he feels. I, too, remember the old days when I came home radiant and fresh. It was the end of May, a soft, warm evening. I can yet see the young leaves on the trees and feel my mother's arms around me and her kiss upon my face. These are the treasures of memory."

the treasures of memory."

So we follow him around Zoar; through the sowing, the harvesting, the wine-making, the beer-brewing, the chicken raising, the troublous economical questions of the community. The chopping down of the ancient woods always meets with protest. Without order, save as they follow in date, the events are set down in these little pictures. Bits of pieneer history drift in. It is January 3, 1892. It snows and blows.

"Old Mike" told me to-day of the time

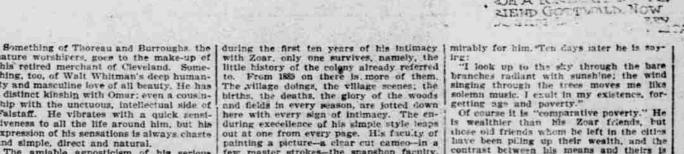
"Old 'Mike' told me to-day of the time when he came to Zoar among the first. His father was left behind sick, and his mothfather was left behind sick, and his mother, with her two children—Mike, aged 12 and a younger sister—came on through the woods alone. The wagoner, who had carried them from Pittsburg, left them, as agreed, at Sandyville, three miles from this place, then a wretched settlement of loghuts in the weeds. It was a few days before Christmas 1817.

Christmas, 1817.

"Mike" tells me bow his mother sat down on a log and burst into tears. Far from home, in a strange land, a trackless wilderness, and no place to shelter her children! No wonder Mike' says men were kinder in those days, for a man with bushy beard and butternut-colored clothes came up and asked what troubled her. She told him. And then he said, 'Can you spin?' and she said, 'Yes,' and he offered her a home until she should get settled with her own people.

The book of Rule was so re-enacted in Zoar eighty odd years ago.

The stock panic of 183 had made some difference in the value of his heldings, or, as would seem, it had pinched those who owed him money. He notes it vaguely: "I myself am a victim. Must I lose this, too?"



ALEXANDER GUNN.



growing. He cannot hide the way this tron-bles him, not that he longs for wealth, but in a little pained by the kindness for which he can make no return. If he only knew! All these men, with a mean exception or two, consider themselves his debtor always. If ever a man appreciated, he did, and such a man needs must love appreciation on a goodly company. The transplant-

bles him, not that he longs for wealth, but in a little pained by the kindness for which he can make no return. If he only knew! All these men, with a mean exception are two, consider themselves his debtor always. If ever a man appreciated, he did, and such a man needs must love appreciation, so a little complaining nois ever after this is heard irking him a little, but never for long.

"CIRCLE NARROWS" AS AGE

CREEPS ON.

There is a very tender passage telling the life romance of his dead friend Hadley, whom he mourns for. He is scarcely & but the thought of age is upon him. Truly, no matter how good we are, it is not well for man to live alone. He feels he is not treated with the old consideration.

"So narrows the circle. There is a distrust felt toward age. The intimate confidences of youth are withheld; the homase paid to age is sorry compensation for the loss of these hearer and more precious fellings."

It is in this mood that he sings a touching requirem for his lost youth.

"I have enjoyed all radiant fancies, all exultant hopes—the ecstary and pain of titled people about, " " I slip quietty

Hapnaer's angel, took me by the hand."

He has not many more journeys before him. One to California is barely alluded to, and his last journey to Germany, where his health was breaking, not at all. He was to fall in sad ruins, like to Campanile, which

be says:

Back again in Zoar, we note they have a feast after the corn husking, in which he vigorously joins. At Zoar they husk the corn while it is still standing, twenty-five men at a time attacking the rows in "the great field."

Something had gone to his heart. During the Eastern journey there is discreet note of a courtship in the party. It culminates afterward in what he calls "the aplendid wedding." There he had been signally honored. Nordica and De Reszke sang and President McKiniey was there. He however, was taken "up in the very front of the church, even ahead of the Va." but some one of his old circle had sent a barbed shaft to him through all the glory of it. "I am home again from the splendid wedding. I am heartsore at the coldness of one, once my friend, who treats me now as a stranger. " " Nor can I shake off the settled distress that weighs me down " Testerday I went to my high farm, sadly dragging my feet through the rustling leaves. " " When hope dies man dies also. Where is the ecstasy of a year ago." DESCRIPTION OF DESCRIPTION OF A HUSKING BEE AT ZOAR.